

JENDICK - Appln. No. 09/412,362

wherein said at least one laser engraved mark is located on the bottom surface of said opening tab to form a code indicating that a person who opens the can using the tab is a winner.

Please enter the following new claims:

92. (New) An opening tab as set forth in claim 83, wherein said at least one laser engraved mark forms a code indicating a site of production.

93. (New) A method of manufacturing opening tabs to be attached to ends of cans, comprising:

intermittently moving a metal strip having an upper surface and a lower surface along a predetermined path into an opening tab forming unit where the opening tabs are formed; providing a laser unit along the path at a position that precedes the opening tab forming unit; and

forming laser engraved marks with the laser unit on at least a selected surface of the upper surface and the lower surface of the strip when the strip is in an immobilized condition, whereby the laser unit is controlled during immobilization of the strip such that the laser engraved marks form a distinct code on the selected surface.

94. (New) A method as set forth in claim 93, wherein the distinct code is at least one of a code that indicates a site of production, an hour code indicating when the tab was produced, a minute code indicating when the tab was produced, and a code that indicates that a person who opens the can using the tab is a winner.

95. (New) An apparatus for manufacturing opening tabs to be attached to ends of cans, comprising:

a supply of a metal strip having an upper surface and a lower surface;

an opening tab forming unit provided along a predetermined path following the supply and structured to form opening tabs;

a strip feeder structured to intermittently move the strip along the path into the opening tab forming unit;

a laser unit provided along the path at a position that precedes the opening tab forming unit, the laser unit providing laser engraved marks on at least one of the upper surface and the lower surface of the strip; and

a control unit in communication with the laser unit, the control unit controlling the laser unit so that the laser engraved marks are provided on at least a selected surface of the upper surface and the lower surface of the strip when the strip is in the immobilized condition, whereby the laser unit is controlled during immobilization of the strip such that the laser engraved marks form a distinct code on the selected surface.

96. (New) An apparatus as set forth in claim 95, wherein the distinct code is at least one of a code that indicates a site of production, an hour code indicating when the tab was produced, a minute code indicating when the tab was produced, and a code that indicates that a person who opens the can using the tab is a winner.